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CELLIST WINS GRADE III, \$200,000 LOUISVILLE AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 21, 2022) – Cellist won Saturday's 85th running of the \$200,000 Louisville Stakes (Grade III) at Churchill Downs by a head over 62-1 longshot **Reigning Spirit** in 2:32.12 for the 1 ½-mile marathon over the Matt Winn Turf Course, which was rated "good" after late afternoon showers.

Ridden by **Julien Leparoux**, Cellist was rated in the clear in sixth during the early stages of the three-turn race as **Cavalry Charge** dictated the pace and led the field of 14 older horses through splits of :24.39, :50.25, 1:16.10, 1:41.97 and 2:07.15. Entering the final turn, Cellist ranged into contention with a wide move, poked his head in front and inched away inside the final furlong before turning back a late charge from Reigning Spirit, the second-longest shot in the field.

Rusty Arnold II trained the homebred winner for **Brad Kelley's Calumet Farm**.

The win was worth \$113,735 and improved Cellist's career earnings to \$467,875 with a record of 3-2-2 in 10 starts. It was his second career stakes victory but first against graded company. He previously won the \$150,000 Audubon at Churchill Downs last spring.

Cellist returned \$13.60, \$7.20 and \$6 as the 5-1 co-second betting choice. Reigning Spirit, under **Colby Hernandez**, paid \$51.40 and \$25.80. **Highest Honors**, ridden by **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, was another 1 ¼ lengths back in third and paid \$9.20 to show. **Cibolian** was another neck back in fourth and was followed by **Bama Breeze**, **Shamrocket**, 9-2 favorite **Camp Hope**, **Modus Operandi (IRE)**, **Cavalry Charge**, **Another Mystery**, **Blanket of Roses**, **Strong Tide**, **Cullum Road** and **Ajourneytofreedom**. **Celerity** was scratched.

Cellist is a 4-year-old gelded son of Big Blue Kitten out of the English Channel mare Cello, was bred in Kentucky.

Racing at Churchill Downs continues Sunday with a nine-race card that begins at 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern). There is a \$28,997 carryover in the Derby City 6 (Races 4-9) and a \$2,508 carryover in the Super Hi-5 (Race 9).

LOUISVILLE QUOTES

Julien Leparoux (jockey, Cellist, winner) – "We got settled in pretty well down the backside. He seemed to handle the track pretty well early on in the race. I could feel around the turn I still had a lot of horse beneath me. I was able to get him to the outside and he had a really good kick home."

Rusty Arnold (trainer, Cellist, winner) – "He had a really good 3-year-old campaign last year. We came into this year with a bad race in Florida (in the Grade III, \$175,000 Tampa Bay Stakes). He got back to Keeneland and thought that race would be a good setup to going in the Louisville. He ran a good second that day and we knew there aren't too many allowance races at this distance. It was a good setup for the Louisville today."

Al Stall Jr. (trainer, Reigning Spirit, runner-up) – "He ran a great race. We were second best."

ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack ("CDRT"), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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